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## **Reggie Bicha Confirmed as DCF Secretary**

Earlier today Reggie Bicha was unanimously confirmed as Secretary of the Department of Children and Families by the Wisconsin State Senate. Bicha has served as Secretary since DCF officially opened its doors on July 1, 2008.

"In the last ten months, we've made great strides to refocus, retool and reprioritize our programs to meet the needs of children and families across our state," Secretary Bicha said. "While we face challenges during these difficult economic times for our nation, by taking advantage of new opportunities and creating new solutions, we can improve the lives of kids and families in Wisconsin."

Already under Secretary Bicha's leadership, DCF has increased child safety, helped more families find high-quality child care and given parents better access to the supports they need to provide for their families.

To ensure the safety of children in out-of-home care, Secretary Bicha directed a comprehensive medical and case review in Milwaukee. DCF collaborated with pediatric specialists to provide medical checkups for 500 children, and staff is also reviewing the case practice received by more than 500 kids. The scope and scale of this review is unprecedented in Wisconsin.

On July 1, DCF launched a Child Care Search web site to assist parents in locating quality child care for their children. The site has been very popular with parents across the state, and there were more than 150,000 requests for pages of information during the month of March alone.

Secretary Bicha and his staff at DCF have also connected middle and high school age children in W-2 participant families to the Wisconsin Covenant and Youth Apprenticeship programs.

All 31 senators present confirmed Secretary Bicha's appointment, and several commended him for his decisiveness and determination during a time of anxiety for families.

"Secretary Bicha has shown the vision and leadership to respond to some very difficult challenges," said Senator Bob Jauch. "He will continue to work diligently on behalf of children and families in Wisconsin, and his confirmation today reinforces the Legislature's confidence in his work."

Earlier this year, Secretary Bicha received the 2009 Commissioner's Award for his significant contributions to the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Wisconsin. For more information on Secretary Bicha, please visit the DCF website at [www.dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov).

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